January 2021

Using my Voice
The Story of My Life
My Gender Identity

If you asked me if I was happy in my body 3 months ago – I would have responded with a no. But now, I am grasping this change with both my hands.

This change has made me more confident and happier in myself. I bet you are wondering what this massive change I am talking about is. Let me just say this: How would you feel if you were in a body that you didn’t feel right in, or didn’t feel comfortable in?

Changing my gender for me was a difficult thing because when you don’t know your gender, or don’t know how to explain, or to come out to parents or friends, this can be really hard.

But, now it has happened, I have never felt so confident in all my life.

As well as changing my gender, I changed my appearance too. Cutting my hair felt like a weight lifted off my shoulders. Having short hair, I now feel more like myself. The most stressful thing when changing my gender was choosing my name, my “dead name” was Chloe-Jade, now it’s Blake-Jay.

The negative impact of being transgender is having either people not supporting you, or having people being transphobic towards you.

Not being accepted is like your heart sinking and you feel hollow.

This is my experience on gender identity and transformation.

How do you feel about my experience?

By Blake Livingstone

At Ethos College, we pride ourselves in being inclusive; it is who we are, it is our vision. During this current climate, the question “Who am I?”, “Where do I fit in the world?” and “What do I believe in?” is very prevalent amongst children, young people and adults alike. It is about finding your place in, what currently seems, a very uncertain world.

During English, young people were given the task of creating a piece of writing that describes a character that goes through a change. This young person in particular, chose to create a piece of writing that was held close to his heart. The piece was as follows.

Be certain of yourself, in an uncertain world

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Appreciating the Power of Language

Over the course of the term so far, students have been using extracts from the novel, ‘The Hate U Give’ by Angie Thomas to explore themes and ideas such as: identity, racism, police brutality, cycle of racial poverty, community and loyalty as well as the importance of developing your voice. Below is a sample of the excellent work they have produced:

A student said: “In this part of the story, the writer communicates the power of language to fight for justice and create change.” To what extent do you agree?

“I agree fully that the writer has communicated this injustice forcefully, ‘Khalil drops [the hairbrush] into the side of the door, opens the door to see if I am Okay…then pow pow…” A hairbrush is not a gun!” I screamed…tears in my eyes.’ This clearly shows the effect on the narrator as she watched Khalil get unlawfully shot by the police. It shows how much she cared, when she screamed the words that were being chanted all around her. It makes the reader feel that this is the first step towards justice and change.”

Written by Chanel Walker

Blake wrote, “I agree with the statement because the writer uses the quotation, ‘a hairbrush is not a gun!’ This statement makes me feel like they are screaming out for help and uses the power of language to fight for justice and create change. The writer uses dialogue to make the atmosphere sound chaotic and violent, and makes the reader think this is not a good place to be. The writer wants to convey that it is a very passionate verbal protest. The writer further suggests this idea with, ‘it’s contagious and echoes all around us.’ This implies that if one person is protesting, everyone else starts and the more people join in the more it spreads. The text suggests an emotion of tension during the protest. Finally, the writer says, ‘fist high in the air, tears in my eyes,’ which suggests to me that protest is intense and people feel passionately about it. The narrator is being reminded of a traumatic time in her life through the use of language, and this emotion of intensity is expressed when she says, ‘tears in my eyes.’”

“People should respect the police at all times, whatever the situation.” Write a speech for your school assembly where you explain your point of view on this.

Good afternoon,
The police. They are supposed to be people who help keep our country safe and to stop crimes when they can. Not cause more havoc around us. Some people will argue that the police know what is right and what is wrong – but they don’t!
Over the course of centuries, some members of the Police, have been racist, homophobic and abusive for no reason, other than their own views and opinions on society and the world we live in. Many of them have got away with it too, because of how high they are.
Take George Floyd, for example. Did he deserve to be pushed on the ground and murdered?
NO!
No human being, or animal deserves that.
On the other hand, I do respect that many police officers work hard to do their job, and act with professionalism and integrity. However, events such as the brutal murder of George Floyd, make it difficult for me to agree that we should respect the police whatever the situation.
Written by Katie Smith
Nurturing activities

In Geography this term, Groups 1 and 2 have been learning all about the climate. They have been studying the different weather types and instruments used to measure the weather. Students made their own rain gauges in order to measure precipitation and are keeping records to work out the average rainfall over the course of a month.

Keeping with the same theme of the outdoors, group one have been looking at the theme of “growth”, through designing and painting their own plant pots as well as planting and nourishing them, as part of their AQA Unit Award certificate. All students successfully completed the task independently, and created some beautiful designs, around the theme of growth. Many of the young people created designs reflecting how they intend to grow mentally and developmentally including overcoming personal fears, job aspirations and broadening their academic knowledge. We were so proud of their hard work and they really enjoyed the task.

Lights, (Climate), Action!

Ethos college science students experienced what it was like to be a film star for the day, as they made a film about climate change. They have been working on a project, attempting to support our local community with practical advice on how everyone can make an impact. Engaging education produced our short film and our students were amazing!!! In the next few weeks we will be sharing the video on our social media platforms so watch this space.

Ethos College school council have been very busy since September. Two students, both from Group 5, were successful in their campaign to be voted in as Chair and Secretary. Well done! The student council discuss topics of interest and decide on projects that they want to undertake. The latest project is asking for donations of toiletries from staff and students to take to inpatients at our local hospital. Due to patients not being allowed visitors, they are struggling with these everyday essentials and are very grateful for anything we can provide. Please send donations in before half term and we will update everyone when we have delivered the packages. Thank you in advance for your help.
Important Online Information

In recent months, our current climate has found us doing the opposite of the norm; and that is to put an emphasis on screen time. This has been due to remote learning, not only at Ethos College, but across the country. With this in mind it is important that we are vigilant on the sites that our young people are using, and the content that they may come across whilst on the internet.

Those with a Sky Broadband package, can activate a tool called ‘Sky Broadband Shield’ which can be really useful in protecting against phishing and malware-infected sites. It also includes Safe Search which is designed to block explicit content when you search online. Your Sky Broadband Shield has a default setting that is suitable for teenagers during the day and adults in the evening. This, however, can be changed to suit the needs of your family. You can:

1. Choose a rating: decide between PG, 13, 18 or customise your protection.
2. Watershed: this feature allows you to set age restrictions depending on the time of day.
3. Block content: you can use this to block specific websites and explicit images from search engines through using Safe Search.

Fancy a dip?

During their Forest School sessions, Group 6 discovered an abandoned care home between Jordan Woods and Oliver Woods, off Sands Lane in Mirfield.

The young people speculated about its previous uses and thought that it may have been an asylum in years gone by. During English lessons, later in the week, the students carried out research into the history of the building and discovered that, in the early 1900s, the building was part of the Calder Farm Reformatory School. It was a surprise to discover that the school used to have an outdoor swimming pool. Comparing present day maps to those from 1907, the students were able to figure out the location of the swimming pool and, during an outdoor education lesson, they navigated their way to the site of the abandoned pool and found it in a rather good condition. Anybody fancy a dip?

Independent Learning and Revision

Kerboodle is an online platform that all students at Ethos College can access. It contains the core subjects, all in one place, which makes learning and revising easier. The online student books contain the content, concepts and summaries of all they will need to know in science, maths, English language and English literature. Students can go to specific topics or just work through the books within each topic, including a summary assessment. If a student does not have a password, please contact a member of Ethos staff.

Date for your diary: Half Term, Week Commencing 15th February 2021

Remember, there are a range of websites to support remote learning and revision from home. Please do not hesitate to ask for support with this if needed.